

checks." In fact, they believe a family of five should have to earn \$350,000 before the spigot of government money would stop entirely.

Socialism for rich people. That is what Speaker PELOSI and Senator SANDERS have sketched out. A terrible way to help those who need it, and experts across the political spectrum agree.

The liberal editors of the Washington Post have blasted so-called progressives demanding a nontargeted giveaway that would give "huge amounts" to "perfectly comfortable families."

Larry Summers, who ran the Treasury Department for President Clinton and the National Economic Council for President Obama, says there is "no good economic argument" for more nontargeted checks with no linkage to need.

The liberal New York Times reported this morning that a majority of the households that get nontargeted checks do not end up spending them on urgent needs but rather just add it to their savings. "We know where the pockets of need are," said one economist, and "putting [money] there would be a much more efficient use."

Fortunately, though some of our colleagues seem to have forgotten, that is exactly what we did only a week ago. It has been less than 5 days since President Trump signed into law another historic bipartisan rescue package targeted to Americans who actually need the help.

We passed an entire second round of PPP loans to save small business jobs, targeted to the hardest hit. We renewed multiple kinds of additional benefits for unemployed workers, including an extra \$300 supplement every week. There are billions for targeted food assistance, billions for targeted rental assistance, and many billions of dollars for vaccine distribution so we can finally beat this virus and reopen the economy in full.

These are the kinds of targeted emergency programs that directly help the most vulnerable, and we just poured almost another trillion dollars into them, less than 5 days ago, along with more direct checks that are already arriving in households' accounts. That is what we did just 5 days ago.

This crisis has not affected everyone equally. The data show that many upper middle-class Americans have kept their jobs, worked remotely, and remained totally financially comfortable. On the other hand, some of our fellow citizens had their entire existence turned upside down and continue to suffer terribly.

We do not need to let the Speaker of the House do socialism for rich people in order to help those who need help. Our duty, both to struggling Americans and to taxpayers, is to focus on targeted relief that will have the maximum impact and help the people who need it the most. That is what the experts say we should do. That is where there is broad bipartisan support, and

that is exactly what we did less than 1 week ago, when nearly \$900 billion in more targeted relief was signed into law for our people.

RECOGNITION OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 9051

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Senate today meets for a rare New Year's Eve session for one reason and one reason only: The Republican leader has refused to allow us to vote on legislation to provide the American people \$2,000 checks. He has twice objected to my requests to set a time for a vote on the measure, claiming yesterday that direct stimulus checks were "poorly targeted," bemoaning the idea that some of these checks might go into "the hands of Democrats' rich friends who don't need the help." Senator TOOMEY said much the same thing.

Well, funny, I don't remember the Republican leader and Senator TOOMEY complaining about how a \$2 trillion across-the-board corporate tax cut was "poorly targeted" because some large companies didn't need the help. No, when corporations get a blanket tax break, that is fine by the Republican majority. When the average American gets a little help from their government, it is "poorly targeted."

I hope that every American heard the objections by these Republican Senators. I hope every American who has their water or heat or electricity shut off or had eviction notices stapled on top of one another to their door or had to choose which meal to skip on a given day—I hope they all heard the reason they will not receive \$2,000 checks is because Leader MCCONNELL thinks it could wind up in the hands of "Democrats' rich friends."

Let's be very clear. There is one way and only one way to pass \$2,000 checks before the end of the year, and that is to pass the House bill. It is the only way to get the American people the \$2,000 checks they need and deserve.

The House is gone for the session. Any modification or addition to the House bill can't become law. Either the Senate takes up and passes the House bill or struggling Americans will not get \$2,000 checks during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Leader MCCONNELL knows this. So he has said that the Senate can only vote on a bill that combines the checks with other unrelated partisan policies: a repeal of section 230 and an investigation into the President's dishonest and bogus claims of election fraud.

The Republican leader claims that President Trump insists that all three issues must be addressed in one bill, but, of course, the President has made

no such demand. President Trump couldn't care less about how the bills are packaged in Congress.

So the Republican leader has invented an excuse to prevent a clean, up-or-down, yes-or-no vote on \$2,000 checks from coming to the floor. This maneuver to combine all three issues is intended to kill the possibility of \$2,000 checks ever becoming law.

Just to prove it, let me make this offer to the Republican majority. We are willing to vote on the other issues that President Trump mentioned—all the issues the Republican leader says must be addressed—so long as we vote on them separately. That way, \$2,000 checks could become law, and we could debate all the President's supposed concerns.

We can vote on setting up a commission to look at the President's roundly rejected claims of voter fraud. We would also have the commission look at voter suppression and gerrymandering. That is completely unrelated to helping Americans pay their bills, but we are willing to take a look at the whole picture. Just give us a vote on the House-passed bill so we can get help now for people who desperately need it.

Heck, we can also have a vote on repealing 230. We can do it today. We will use Leader MCCONNELL's exact language. He wouldn't agree to that because he knows his caucus wouldn't actually support such an act. Unlike the President, some Members of this body understand what 230 means. They understand that section 230, which certainly needs change, actually enables the President to spew his lies.

We all know the 117th Congress will have to take a close look at the relationship between liability and reckless speech on the internet. But if Leader MCCONNELL wants a vote on these issues, we are here for it. Just give us a vote on the House-passed bill, and we can vote on whatever rightwing conspiracy theory you would like.

We can even vote to set up a special blue-ribbon commission to determine whether Georgia's secretary of State has a brother named Ron, if that would make our Republican friends happy.

Just don't let these conspiracy theories and Presidential fantasies get in the way of helping actual people—people whose livelihoods have been torn apart by this pandemic, people whose lives have been torn apart by the administration's mismanagement of this pandemic, people who need just a little direct assistance.

The President's term, thankfully, will end in 20 days. It is a term that has been marked by hate and division and turmoil. He has so far used his term to enrich himself and the wealthy.

Let's close out the term on a good note. For once, he wants to help regular people, to give Americans a leg up. Let's allow him to do that.

We have a chance at the end of this painful year to give Americans a reason to have some hope in 2021. The only